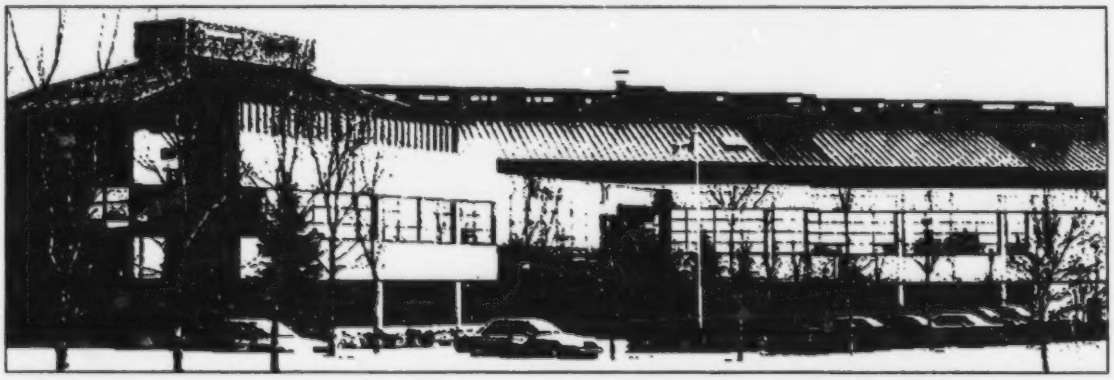
CITY OF CALGARY

Employment Centres Strategy



Approved by Calgary City Council July 1999

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Executive

Employment Centres Strategy

Encouraging Employment Opportunities Closer to Where Calgarians Live

New Jobs – A Strategic Necessity

The downtown will continue to be Calgary's predominant employment concentration and industrial lands will continue to be used for industrial purposes. Residential growth in outlying suburban locations has created new demands and opportunities to locate employment closer to the newer residential areas. The recently adopted *Calgary Plan* proposes the development of suburban employment centres (ECs). ECs are seen as an effective means of providing opportunities for new jobs with a non-downtown location preference, and an opportunity to divert some of the future commuter traffic away from already congested downtown routes.

Why is This Strategy Needed?

Today, only four years after the *Calgary Transportation Plan* was approved, achieving the desired land use patterns and securing the required infrastructure funding is proving to be a major challenge. In particular, efforts to set the stage for the location of future jobs closer to residential growth corridors and transit facilities have met with only limited success. The consequences lead to increased congestion due to longer vehicle trips and reduced transit ridership.

Three Types of Suburban Employment Centres

The Calgary Plan envisions some suburban jobs located in active mixed-use, higher density centres that work well for pedestrians and transit. Other suburban jobs will be located in employment areas such as business/office parks or light industrial areas that may be less suited to transit service or a mix of land uses. Three types of suburban ECs are proposed:

- Major suburban centres
- Secondary centres
- Employment areas

Core Concepts

While the ECs will vary in terms of size, mix, location, and function (see map 1, page 10) they will share some common elements. An EC is a concentration or clustering of primarily non-retail businesses or facilities located in or close to a suburban residential area. The majority of the ECs will include a transit-orientation and pedestrian-friendly design. Included within the ECs may be a range of public services and facilities, LRT station, schools, and open space.

Key Planning Questions

Working collaboratively with City staff, stakeholder groups and members of the public, the EC implementation team will assess a number of planning issues. For example:

- What role should each centre/area serve?
- How many are viable within each planning horizon (5, 10, 20 years and beyond)?
- What is the appropriate mix of uses?
- What level of servicing and access is required?
- What degree of City involvement is required to make the centre work? How proactive and involved might The City need to be to achieve the planning objectives and to ensure that centres are attractive to the market?

Potential Action Steps

Development of the action plan for the *Employment Centres Strategy* will require the expertise and commitment of the various City departments, the development community, other key stakeholders and community residents. A multi-stakeholder communication and planning process will be established to carry out the employment centre strategy. Some of the potential tasks include the following:

Groundwork

- Identify key opportunities & constraints with public & private sector stakeholders
- Create effective policy, guidelines and regulatory tools

Supporting Market Initiatives

- Create effective development incentives to stimulate EC development.
- Create an EC implementation team to expedite appropriate applications.

Proactive City Initiatives

- Use existing City-owned Sites Strategically
- Provide municipal infrastructure to support EC site proposals
- Decentralize public sector services to EC sites, as appropriate
- Consider City purchase of certain long-term employment sites, if required
- Work with nearby urban municipalities to support their economic development
- Explore redevelopment/intensification possibilities

Anticipated Outcomes of This Strategy

1. Greater degree of coordination and consistency throughout the Corporation with regard to implementation of *Calgary Plan* and CTP policies related to land use and transportation.

2. Greater clarity, consistency and predictability for the development community in terms of development approvals.

3. More innovative, flexible and consistent land use bylaws and other development regulations designed to facilitate the desired planning outcomes (and avoid undesired outcomes or unnecessary development constraints at employment centre sites).

4. Better integration among the Corporation's planning, regulatory and budgeting processes with regard to elements associated with the employment centre strategy and transportation investments.

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Chapter

The Location of New Jobs - A Strategic Necessity

Encouraging Employment Opportunities Closer to Where Calgarians Live

Calgary's downtown is, and should continue to be, the predominant employment concentration in Calgary. But, with continued residential growth in distant suburban locations, there is a growing need to focus the location of new jobs that prefer areas outside of the downtown in a way that supports Calgary's mobility and quality of life objectives.

In July 1998, Council directed the Administration to prepare an implementation strategy to proactively attract and accommodate jobs in strategic suburban locations over the long term. This report provides the proposed strategy and a recommended implementation framework for The City.

Introduction

In 1995, Council approved the *Calgary Transportation Plan* (CTP), a mobility and land use strategy intended to accommodate Calgary's growth to the 1.25 million population level while maintaining mobility, affordability and quality of life for Calgarians.

[Employment centres] will reduce the pressure to expand the transportation system, addressing one of the key impacts of growth
(Corporate Business Plan, p.18).

More recently, *The Calgary Plan* (1998) put these objectives into an even broader framework of strategic goals and policies for Calgary, all intended to maintain and even enhance the city's quality of life and livability over time. A fundamental element of CTP is the connection between the location of future development (e.g., housing and jobs) and transportation investments. The key objective is for the two to reinforce each other so that The City and its citizens get the most benefit out of existing and new transportation infrastructure. The location of jobs relative to where people live has a significant impact on the need for and use of transportation infrastructure, congestion levels, transit ridership and quality of life. The urgency of achieving suburban employment centres was further emphasized in the *Corporate Business Plan* (1998).

In many ways CTP was visionary. It called for new patterns of land use (such as suburban employment centres) and changes in personal travel behaviour. But, for the vision to become a reality, major investments are required and improved land use/transportation relationships must be realized. The plan anticipated that our city at 1.25 million people

could enjoy a level of mobility that was only 10-15% lower (that is, more congested) than was experienced in 1991 **if** approximately $4 billion was invested in transportation infrastructure by the 1.25 million threshold, **if** supportive land use patterns were achieved, **and if** there was success in influencing certain travel behaviours (e.g., increasing vehicle occupancy rates).

Recent transportation modeling suggests substantially worsening levels of congestion in the system in the future.

Today, only four years after CTP was approved, it is clear that securing the required infrastructure funding, achieving the desired land use patterns and changing travel behaviour is proving to be a major challenge. In particular, efforts to set the stage for the location of future jobs closer to residential growth corridors and transit facilities have met with only limited success. This situation was reported to Council in the *CTP Monitoring Report* (July 1998) by the Transportation Plan Monitoring Committee.

A number of very important employment centre development opportunities have been lost to short-term market demands for other land uses, such as retail and single family housing (See Appendix: Why the Market is Slow to Build Offices, or Protect Options for Long-term Office Uses, in Strategic Locations). The consequences of these lost opportunities are evident in the results of the most recent (November 1998) transportation modeling analysis for Calgary at the 1.25 million population level. The modeling suggests substantially worsening levels of congestion in the system by 2003, 2008 and 2018[1] resulting from longer vehicle trips and reduced transit ridership on a city-wide basis (compared to the original CTP forecasts), both arising from the prospect of reduced levels of employment in strategic suburban locations over the long-term.

	Population	Jobs
1998	819,334	452,500
2018	1,254,293	671,861
	+434,959	**+219,361**

While the Downtown will continue to be the principal employment centre, the goal is to encourage a significant proportion of the 220,000 **new** jobs that will be created over the next 20 years [see sidebar] to locate in strategic locations—particularly in the northwest, west and southwest suburban sectors where the imbalance of jobs to population is the most pronounced. For that reason, one of the key land use directions of CTP is to create "centres of activity" which are defined as:

> "Mixed use centres and corridors throughout the city and close to new suburbs, that support walking and transit and reduce the number and length of car trips."

This policy direction is in line with global economic restructuring trends that have lead to a changing relationship between the central city and the suburbs. Since World War II, the proportion of the labour force employed in offices has increased steadily as primary and secondary industry has become more efficient. For example, in Canada, the proportion of the labour force that is in the managerial, professional, technical and clerical categories increased from 19 percent in 1941 to 48 percent in 1991[2].

In Calgary, employment growth has been occurring throughout the city. The intent of the *Employment Centres Strategy* is to channel a portion of this job growth to locations that

[1] Revised forecasts indicate that Calgary will reach the 1.25 million population threshold in 2018 rather than in 2024 as was projected in the CTP, resulting in six fewer years for achieving CTP objectives and undertaking the required capital investments.

[2] Matthew, M. 1993. The Suburbanization of Toronto Offices. *The Canadian Geographer*, 37, no. 4 pp. 293-306.

help to maximize public benefits. Developing large scale centres within the future growth corridors will, hopefully, produce a sufficient concentration of jobs to support a gradual change in commuting patterns.

It should be noted that **non-retail** jobs are the focus of this strategy because the majority of these workers travel during the peak hours when congestion levels are the greatest. Travel to and from retail jobs usually occurs outside of the peak hours.

Achieving suburban employment centre objectives is a critical dimension of The City's growth management strategy. The development of employment centres is integral to The City's ability to accommodate growth in a way that is affordable, efficient and able to enhance Calgarians' mobility choices without substantially lessening quality of life over time.

Suburban Employment Centres – What Do They Help To Achieve?

The **planning rationale** for developing suburban employment centres is multi-faceted and is outlined below. *The Calgary Plan* contains several planning objectives and policies that may be implemented through the development of suburban employment centres. Some of applicable policies are included below.

Building a More Sustainable City

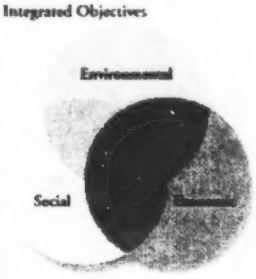
An important planning direction is the development of human settlements that are more sustainable over the long term. This refers to urban communities that are environmentally healthy, socially and economically resilient, affordable, and offer a high quality of life.

An urban community that offers a diverse range of activities, housing types and employment activities is considered more sustainable because it can usually weather demographic changes and downturns in the economy better than those that are more homogeneous in character. The City has committed to achieving a more sustainable urban form through its planning and servicing strategies. The *Employment Centres Strategy*, in trying to improve the relationship between land uses and the efficiency of transportation systems, is just one component of that commitment.

Calgary Plan Policies

Council has already recognized the need for more sustainable communities, more diversity in land uses and the need to provide employment opportunities in the suburbs.

- Integrate social, economic and environmental objectives into a coordinated decision-making process to maintain high standards of living, social harmony and environmental quality. (Policy 2-1A)
- Provide a mix of services and amenities for nearby residents and, where appropriate, a range of job opportunities in community and neighbourhood centres in new suburbs. (Policy 2-2.1D)



Linking Land Use and Mobility

The location of jobs affects the form and development of the city. Most pronounced, particularly in Calgary, is the relationship between commuting patterns and the separation of job and housing locations. Currently, most jobs are located in the downtown core and in industrial areas in the Northeast and the Southeast. However, most people *live* in other locations - the northwest, west and southwest. This development pattern produces heavy traffic flows in peak commuting times, with very little traffic going in the opposite direction. As such, one of The City's planning objectives is to encourage more "reverse-flow" commuting to take full advantage of available road and transit capacity at peak hours.

According to *The Calgary Plan*, "strategically, getting more jobs closer to population growth corridors would help reduce the growth in cross-town trips, the length of trips and the proportion of auto-oriented trips during the peak hour, thereby offsetting the growing levels of downstream congestion and short-cutting through established neighbourhoods".

Calgary Plan Policies

- Improve the jobs/population balance in all areas of the city to reduce travel distances by:
  - encouraging most housing development in the north, south, northeast and southeast growth corridors
  - increasing job opportunities in the north, south, west, northwest and southwest sectors
  - focusing new suburban jobs in mixed-use, higher density centres that work well for pedestrians and transit
  - locating compatible jobs within and close to residential neighbourhoods to support walking, cycling and shorter vehicle trips
  - using industrial lands for industrial purposes which require separation from other uses and/or rail access
  - endeavouring to ensure [illegible] land uses and commercial activities in industrial areas are compatible with the capacity of the road systems designed for the area. (Policy 2-2A)
- Encourage appropriate new office development to locate in transit-supportive areas through the amendment of land use classifications, and the provision of infrastructure, etc. (Policy 2-2B)

"The real estate fundamentals out in the "burbs" are terrific and we should see its renaissance continue well past the year 2000. The suburban office market has and will continue to surprise many. Demand for single purpose and design build product will continue to push that market up."
Alex Brough, Royal LePage

Responding to Changing Markets

Employment trends are changing and will continue to evolve in the future. Business location needs are increasingly diverse and complex due to factors such as:

- global economic restructuring (information revolution, more "footloose" businesses)
- improvements in communication technology (allowing for telecommuting, work-at-home options, decentralized business)
- greater entrepreneurship and small business development (which needs cheaper, more accessible space than usually available in the downtown).
- changing labour force participation rates (more two-income families, more complex commuting patterns)
- greater variation in the retail industry (power centres, niche marketing, less emphasis on traditional department stores, on-line shopping and banking).

Rigid land use classification and regulation may not be the best way to accommodate such a changeable and complex marketplace. To respond to this type of change, *The Calgary Plan* encourages more diversity in land uses in suburban areas to permit development of new job opportunities. It is recognized that development of the suburban employment centres will be an "evolutionary, not revolutionary" process and will require changes to the regulatory systems.

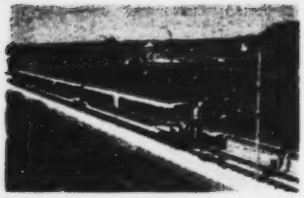
Calgary Plan Policies

- Enhance the quality of commercial and industrial areas by creating viable, diverse commercial areas throughout the city that provide opportunities for working, shopping and entertainment activities close to one another. (Policy 2-2.2.3B)
- Attract and retain suitable business and industry to Calgary by fostering economic diversification and providing a climate that supports and enhances economic activity. (Policy 2-3.1A)

Managing Scarce Resources

These days, all governments are facing revenue constraints. The City is particularly challenged because senior governments are funding less, despite greater infrastructure and service delivery demands. One approach to dealing with funding shortfalls is to more strategically target public investments. This would require setting priorities and choosing sites in concert with transportation investments, and making decisions based on the potential to maximize public benefits.

The development of employment centres could be better linked to The City's capital works and budgeting process to ensure that infrastructure investments were targeted to these areas. Influencing the location of housing and employment is another potential means for managing infrastructure spending requirements over the long-term.



Calgary Plan Policies

- Support the utility and vibrancy of LRT stations by actively encouraging both public and private development and integration of a full range of compatible land uses (residential, employment and commercial activities) at designated sites. (Policy 2-2H)

- Encourage new suburban growth to locate in areas within each sector that will require the least expenditure by The City for new municipal infrastructure. (Policy 2-2.2.2.1J)

Recent Experience in the Implementation of Employment Centres

Losing Ground

The *CTP Monitoring Report*, presented to Council in July 1998, identified a number of actions that have been undertaken to support the implementation of suburban employment centres. These include:

- Preparation of the draft *Shawnessy Centre Plan*
- Development concepts for the Anderson and 146th Avenue LRT station areas
- Planning for CFB West lands
- Planning for employment centres in Growth Area Management Plans

The report also identified situations where the ability to accommodate jobs in suburban centres has been significantly compromised, or even eliminated. Examples include:

- Westhills Town Centre
- Strathcona Town Centre
- Shawnessy Town Centre (north of Marquis of Lorne Trail)
- Country Hills Town Centre
- Crowfoot Town Centre

In the situations noted above, with the exception of Strathcona Town Centre, recent land use and development approvals have resulted in the creation of auto-oriented retail uses serving the shopping and restaurant needs of nearby communities. Retail demand follows residential development and needs to be accommodated within or in proximity to new communities. These larger sites, in most instances, were designated for regional commercial/retail uses prior to, or while, CTP was being prepared and owners expect to develop their sites in accordance with those approved land uses.

As a consequence of the recent development of retail uses in these locations, revisions were made to each site's assumed level of non-retail employment at the 1.25 million population threshold. Table 1 provides current (1996) and expected job levels at the 1.25 million threshold, and contrasts those with the original CTP assumptions, which were made before many of these sites had experienced substantial development of any kind. The impact of this decrease in anticipated non-retail jobs on the recent transportation modeling analysis is a significant increase in congestion.

Table 1: Job Levels & Anticipated Jobs at 2018, Contrasted with CTP Expectations

	Number of Jobs		Assumed Jobs at 1.25 million population	
	1991	1996	CTP 2024 (Original Assumption)	2018 (Revised Assumption)
Westhills Town Centre	0	711	6,300	2,700
Strathcona Town Centre	10	0	5,000	1,000
Shawnessy Town Centre	1,183	2,325	20,075	14,600[3]
Country Hills Town Centre	0	0	5,000	3,000
Crowfoot Town Centre	1,205	1,848	10,500	3,000

Calgary's suburban office market inventory will continue to expand throughout 1999.
(CB Commercial 1998 Third Quarter Summary).

The missed opportunities in the development of these sites have been a source of struggle in recent efforts to realize The City's strategic objectives in the face of limited short-term market opportunities. While it is clear that there is a limited demand for suburban office space in the short-term, it is not clear that this limitation will necessarily prevail over the mid- or long-term. In fact, recent commercial forecasts cite a strengthening market for suburban office space[4], driven by factors such as tightening office vacancy rates, rising rents - especially in the downtown, and the prospect of ample affordable parking, easier access/less congestion, and the ability to build to suit in less time and at a lower cost than in the downtown. Demand for suburban office space, like other commercial real estate forms, may reflect a cyclical but generally increasing demand over time, particularly as the labour force resides further and further from the downtown and congestion levels rise.

[3] This figure assumes a higher level of employment, relative to CTP assumptions, located immediately south of Marquis of Lorne Trail South and west of Macleod Trail.

[4] See, for example, 1998 quarterly reports on Calgary suburban office trends from CB Commercial Real Estate Group Alberta Inc. (Suburban Office Perspective), Colliers International (Office Report), Torode Realty Limited (Suburban Office).

Chapter 2

Employment Centres - What are they? Where will they be?

Core Concepts

When put forward in CTP, the idea of a suburban employment centre implied several core concepts, yet anticipated a great deal of variety in physical form, density, mix of use and potential job concentration. The core concepts include the following:

- A concentration or clustering of primarily non-retail businesses or facilities located in or close to a suburban residential area;
- A comprehensive public systems plan that provides for a high level of access by transit as well as public amenities that respond to the needs of employees and other users;
- A built form that is compatible with adjacent uses and communities but that attempts to accommodate as high an ultimate level of non-retail employment as is reasonable for the specific context (i.e. generally, "the more the better", subject to reasonable constraints defined by the situation);
- Pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented physical design of public systems in locations adjacent to LRT or enhanced transit services (e.g., along transit corridors);
- Interim and long-term uses that would enhance the centre's ability to attract desired employment and related uses over time.

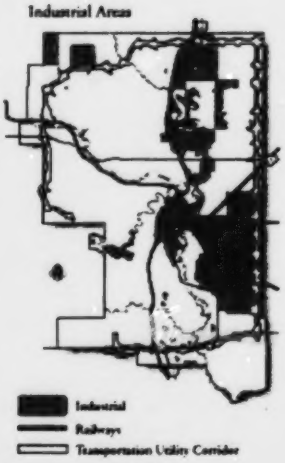
Beyond these core concepts, there exists a great deal of flexibility in terms of related uses, which may or may not be provided. Related elements or qualities may include:

- Some amount of destination retail (beyond serving the adjacent communities), but of a scale that is not detrimental to the objective of encouraging non-retail jobs over the longer-term;
- Ancillary retail/restaurants to support safety and vitality around transit facilities, as well as to provide services for employees;
- Multi-family housing, where compatible;

- Public facilities and services (e.g., library, recreation facilities, high schools);
- Major institutional uses (e.g. hospital, post secondary education facilities);
- Entertainment facilities (e.g. theatres, restaurants).

Three Types of Suburban Employment Centres

The Calgary Plan envisions some suburban jobs located in active mixed-use, higher density centres that work well for pedestrians and transit. The location of these centres will take into account the capacity of major roads and the potential for transit service. As well, new suburbs are encouraged to provide more employment opportunities within walking distance of residences either through work at home or in very localized commercial buildings. Other suburban jobs will be located in business/office parks or light industrial areas that may be less suited to transit service or a mix of land uses but are situated in proximity to major residential growth corridors.



Beyond these centres are Calgary's established northeast, southeast and central industrial areas (see sidebar), which have traditionally accommodated land-extensive light and heavy industrial activities. In the future, these areas will continue to accommodate these uses.

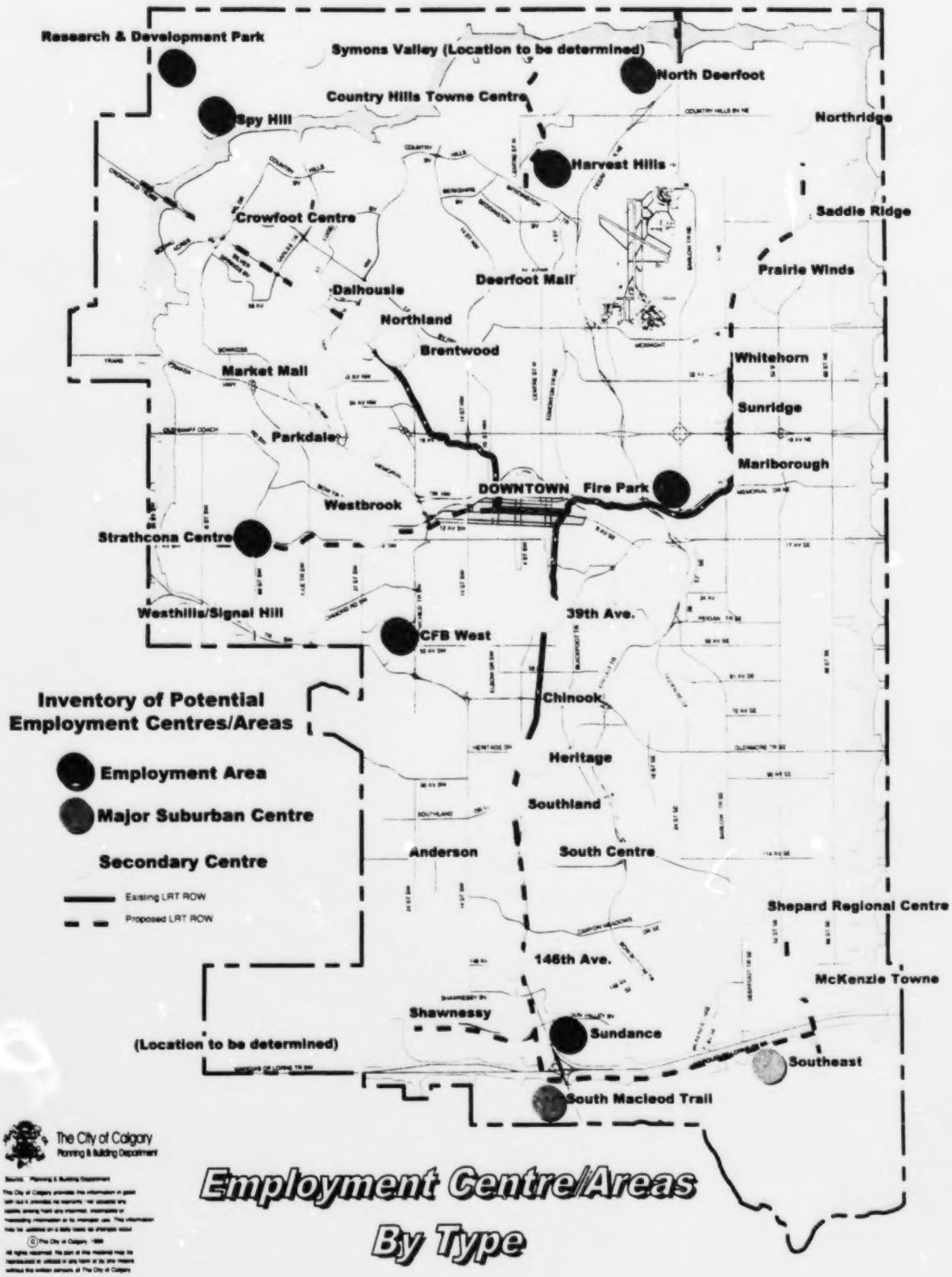
This strategy proposes a "centres" classification that is a hybrid of what exists today and the future urban structure required to support the quality of life, employment needs, mobility and affordability concerns of a city of 1.25 million people or larger. Most of the employment outside of the downtown and beyond the industrial areas will be located in three types of centres or areas:

- Major Suburban Centres
- Secondary Centres
- Employment Areas

A full range of types of centres is necessary to accommodate the anticipated diversity of economic activities, services, housing types and building forms. Therefore, centres can, and should, vary in size, scope, role and function.

Experience in other cities emphasizes the uniqueness of each centre in its local context. Rather than rigid rules or formulas, each centre tends to evolve in its own time and way. What is important to each centre is predictability and consistency in achieving certain **public objectives** related to function, quality and accessibility.

There is a diversity of location choices for potential employment uses in Calgary. This strategy suggests that future office-oriented suburban jobs should be located primarily in areas or centres where the maximum potential exists to achieve public objectives, such as those discussed in the planning rationale above. Map 1 identifies a range of employment centre opportunities throughout Calgary. Each site offers different opportunities in terms of market potential, public benefits and amenities.


Research & Development Park
Symons Valley (Location to be determined)
North Deerfoot
Country Hills Towne Centre
Spy Hill
Northridge
Harvest Hills
Crowfoot Centre
Saddle Ridge
Prairie Winds
Deerfoot Mall
Dalhousie
Northland
Brentwood
Whitehorn
Market Mall
Sunridge
Parkdale
Mariborough
DOWNTOWN
Fire Park
Westbrook
Strathcona Centre
Westhills/Signal Hill
39th Ave.
CFB West
Chinook
Heritage
Southland
Anderson
South Centre
Shepard Regional Centre
146th Ave.
McKenzie Towne
Shawnessy
Sundance
(Location to be determined)
Southeast
South Macleod Trail
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Employment Area
Major Suburban Centre
Secondary Centre
Existing LRT ROW
Proposed LRT ROW
The City of Calgary
Planning & Building Department
Employment Centre/Areas
By Type

Further work will be required to define the appropriate designation and associated implementation strategy (see "Employment Centre Guidelines"). Following are characteristics of the three types of centres.

Major Suburban Centres

The intent of these centres is to create a significant concentration of activity and a focal point for office development, medium density residential and community facilities. Optimal sites will be those that help meet a large number of The City's transportation and land use objectives, while respecting market potential. Because of the intended scale of this type of centre, a maximum of 2-3 are anticipated and will likely require more attention and public investment than the other types of employment centres and areas.

The "major centres" will be centrally located in the projected growth corridors. At present, they are greenfield sites in the north, south and southeast (see Map 1, page 10). Greenfield sites represent perhaps the best opportunity to "do the right thing" because they are currently designated Urban Reserve and hence The City, in collaboration with landowners, has the means to influence the ultimate land use. Joint planning is a logical option for greenfield sites.

The major centre located south of Marquis of Lorne Trail and west of Macleod Trail and the centre at north Deerfoot Trail may entail a concentration of activity centred within a larger employment area (e.g., business/office park). In the north Deerfoot area, uses may also include light industrial activities.

Some of the characteristics of a preferred major suburban centre location are:

- Provides a central focal point in future residential growth corridors;
- Able to locate a broad range of public and community facilities, such as regional recreation centre, schools, health centres, public sector offices, etc.;
- Enhances the job to population balance in major residential growth corridors;
- Can be serviced with a high level of transit (LRT or buses);
- Easily accessible to pedestrians, transit users and drivers. Therefore, the site should be located at a major intersection and have good road access;
- Ample land available for development of non-retail employment uses over time.

Secondary Centres

There will be many secondary centres and they will vary in size and land use mix. They could have a range of services, shopping, recreation, residential and employment uses. The amount of development and the balance among the types of uses will vary depending on community and site characteristics, and existing long-term uses in each location.

Over the next 20 years it is anticipated that some amount of new office development might be accommodated as part of the redevelopment of older suburban shopping centres and other redeveloping areas. Current examples include Brentwood and North Hill.

Some LRT station areas represent other important opportunities for encouraging the development of non-retail jobs. Examples include: 39th Avenue, Chinook, Heritage, Southland, Anderson, and 146th Avenue [future]). Recommendations in the *LRT South Corridor Land Us Study* (1981) encourage the creation of high density, mixed use and residential development surrounding LRT stations. The intention is to generate higher LRT ridership and to create safe, lively station areas that provide services and amenities to nearby communities.

Some of the characteristics of a preferred secondary centre location are:

- Enhances the job to population balance by being located in north, south, west, northwest and southwest sectors;
- Can be well served by transit;
- Sufficient land to accommodate some amount of employment centre development (e.g., mix of uses, intensification);
- Responds to need for a community focus for surrounding neighbourhoods;
- Is compatible with adjacent uses;
- Has redevelopment and/or intensification opportunity (may have obsolete or underutilized uses);
- Takes advantage of existing infrastructure such as LRT stations, recreation centre facilities, utilities, etc.

Employment Areas

The intent of employment areas is to accommodate business activity that prefers a more land extensive but quality environment such as business/office parks in a campus-like setting or "flex" uses comprising substantial office with clean manufacturing. These areas tend to be auto-oriented with no residential use and limited retail.

Some of the characteristics of a preferred employment area location include:

- Enhances the job to population balance by being located in north, south, west, northwest and southwest sectors;
- Takes advantage of existing infrastructure (e.g., roads, transit);
- A strong transit-orientation is not expected, although adequate bus service would be provided. To the extent possible, it is desirable to provide a node(s) of employee/user activity, with sidewalks and transit access to serve as a focal point for the area;
- Convenient road access, usually at a major intersection;
- Compatible with adjacent uses;

- Adequate land available;
- Enhances economic development opportunities for Calgary.

Employment Centre Guidelines

With potential locations identified, one of the first steps of the implementation strategy will be to develop guidelines for each of the three types of employment centres/areas, as follows:

Function: What role should the centre/area serve? Is it a secondary centre, LRT station area intensification, etc.?

Number: How many centres/areas are viable within different timeframes; how many can The City and the market adequately sustain within the next 20 years?

Mix of Uses: What is the appropriate mix of uses?

Size: How much land is required to support the intended concentration of activities?

Density: What densities make sense?

Transportation: What level of transit service is required? What type of road access is needed? What road configuration is needed to serve a range of users (pedestrians, transit users, drivers, trucks)?

Public Realm: What urban design treatment is appropriate? How much open space?

City Involvement: What sort of City involvement may be required to make this type of centre work? How proactive and involved should The City be to achieve the planning objectives and to ensure that the centre is attractive to the market?

Chapter

Getting Proactive

The City's Capacity to Meet the Challenges of Developing Suburban Employment Centres

Apart from directly leasing office space for municipal purposes, The City cannot create a short-term demand for suburban office space where one does not exist. But, The City has considerable ability to influence the relative attractiveness of suburban office sites, in addition to having the authority and ability to "keep options open" so that employment location objectives can be achieved over the longer-term.

- Through its **land use planning** processes, The City can plan for the eventual development and/or redevelopment of commercial sites and employment centres to achieve long-term objectives.
- Through its **regulatory framework**, The City can create regulatory tools that offer greater clarity and flexibility, providing the market with a higher level of certainty of use, on the one hand, and flexibility in use and design on the other.
- Through its **approval processes**, The City can give greater priority to applications that help to further strategic objectives related to mobility and public investment.
- Through its role as a **service provider**, The City can give priority to the provision of infrastructure and services necessary to stimulate and support the development of non-retail employment uses in strategic sites. The City could also partner in the provision of amenities and services to support workers situated in an employment centre (as has been done in the downtown historically).
- As a **landowner** and/or commercial **land developer**, The City can demonstrate commitment to the employment centre strategy and provide built examples of employment centres. The City can purchase, develop, retain, lease or sell commercial lands in strategic locations.
- As a **leader, facilitator and expeditor**, The City can promote and market the employment centre strategy and engage a wide variety of stakeholders in the process of supporting the strategy, and in creating suburban employment centres.

The Case for Action

In view of the preceding discussion and the market challenges described in Appendix 1, it is clear that The City will have to take a far more proactive role in promoting, expediting and maintaining long-term options for developing suburban employment centres in Calgary if they are to be achieved. The following facts support the case for action:

1. Several key corporate strategic objectives, and associated community benefits, rest upon achieving suburban employment centres over the long-term. The expected consequences of **not** achieving the *Employment Centres Strategy* include increased levels of congestion and under-utilization of transportation infrastructure resulting in reduced mobility levels, fewer effective mobility choices, higher transportation costs and a lower quality of life for Calgarians in the future.

2. The ability to create employment centres, particularly in the city's west, northwest and southwest corridors, is being eroded or lost and requires a greater degree of intervention if employment centre options are to be kept open for the long-term.

3. Many of the challenges facing the effective implementation of the *Employment Centres Strategy* have been recently encountered and are understood (Appendix 1). With the support and participation of landowners, developers, investors and industry experts, it is expected that effective tools, processes and incentives can be developed/negotiated to at least maintain long-term options for achieving employment centre objectives over time, if not actually stimulating development interest in the short-term.

4. The commercial market, through its own cycles, may eventually facilitate the transition of some initial land uses (e.g. retail) to more intense non-retail employment use at strategic sites. However, both the likelihood and timing is uncertain. *The Calgary Plan's* intended strategic outcomes will not be realized within meaningful timeframes relative to congestion levels and municipal infrastructure investment requirements if The City simply follows a "wait and see" or "leave it to the market" approach.

5. The City has a number of unique and potentially influential mechanisms through which it can work with the market and stakeholders to promote, expedite and support the development of suburban employment centres over both short- and long-term timeframes.

In summary, there is both urgency and opportunity for The City to adopt a more proactive stance in supporting the implementation of suburban employment centres.

Approaching Implementation on Three Levels

The proposed *Employment Centres Strategy* requires a comprehensive approach and represents a new way of "doing business" for The City. The *Strategy* has three main thrusts, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Proposed Employment Centres Implementation Actions

1. Groundwork for Action	2. Supporting Market Initiatives	3. Proactive City Initiatives
1a. Adopt, publish and promote the *Employment Centres Strategy*	2a. Create effective development incentives to stimulate EC development	3a. Use City-owned sites strategically
1b. Develop on ongoing communication process with the development community and other key stakeholders to identify development opportunities, improved regulatory tools and innovative methods of addressing market constraints	2b. Create an applications "quick-response team"	3b. Purchase land in key EC sites, when and where beneficial to do so
1c. Investigate and learn from the EC experience in other cities	2c. Conduct joint planning studies with landowners of EC sites	3c. Establish an ECs development mechanism
1d. Identify key EC locations and assess their potential		3d. Provide municipal infrastructure to support EC development, where strategic to do so
1e. Create effective policy, guidelines and regulatory tools		3e. Explore co-development, joint venture or partnership opportunities
1f. Develop a generic package of EC design principles		3f. Decentralize City and government personnel / services to EC sites, as appropriate
1g. Provide an evaluation of strategic benefits for proposals at EC sites		3g. Work with nearby urban municipalities to support employment growth
1h. Develop performance measures		3h. Engage a real estate expert to expedite market awareness of the strategy
		3i. Explore redevelopment / intensification possibilities

The first layer, **Groundwork for Action**, provide the basic building blocks for effective implementation. The next two layers contain tools for responding to or supporting market initiative, and specific proactive initiatives that The City should undertake directly. The proposed actions for all three layers are described in greater detail below and in Appendix 2.

Hierarchy of Actions

Work should begin first on the proposed actions in the Groundwork for Action layer because these actions enable The City to support market initiative and to be proactive. At the same time, it will be important to be prepared to respond quickly to opportunities when they arise.

It is suggested that an inter-departmental employment centre team be established to integrate and coordinate this work.

1. Groundwork for Action

The recommended actions in this layer deal with "getting our internal house in order" regarding The City's capacity to be a **leader, facilitator and expeditor** (through land use planning, policy implementation and communication with stakeholders and the public) and its role as land use **regulator** and **approval authority**.

There are three main requirements for building the foundation for successful implementation. In its role as leader, The City should promote the strategy widely by building awareness internally throughout the Corporation, to the public, and to external stakeholders such as landowners, investors, real estate agents, commercial industry leaders, CEDA, etc.

With the approval of the general EC implementation strategy comes the need to do the next level of analysis, selecting sites for priority action in the short and mid-term and developing an appropriate action plan for each one.

Another very important requirement is to create effective policy and regulatory tools to support the *Employment Centres Strategy*. Recent experience in trying to encourage non-retail suburban employment has pointed to the need to address existing policy and/or regulatory tools that pose barriers, constrain and/or contradict aspects of the *Employment Centres Strategy*. This will involve amending the Land Use Bylaw and other planning documents, as determined through further investigation and discussion.

This stage of the strategy will involve a series of discussions and workshops with the development community, City departments and other key stakeholders. The purpose of these discussions would be to review the opportunities and constraints associated with the strategy, priority locations, appropriate guidelines and regulatory tools, etc.

The proposed action steps for laying the groundwork are outlined in Appendix 2.

2. Supporting Market Initiatives

The intent of the recommended actions in this section are to demonstrate commitment to the employment centre strategy through an array of tools that will encourage and support private industry to develop suburban offices in key locations.

After discussions with landowners, commercial real estate agents and other industry experts, three primary mechanisms for supporting market initiative were identified. When asked how The City could encourage or constructively support market initiatives, expediting the development permit process was the most common response. In an industry where "time is money", speeding up the development process was seen to be a very attractive incentive. Therefore, the first proposal below involves developing a "quick-response team" that would be deployed to expedite applications that are supportive of the *Employment Centres Strategy*.

A number of other potential incentives were also mentioned, but there was no broad consensus on which would prove most effective. Consequently, the second proposal is to form a working group (with industry experts) to investigate and test effective incentive options for Council's consideration at a later date.

The third mechanism, joint planning studies with landowners, applies to greenfield sites in particular and, in some cases, to redevelopment sites. By working with the landowners / developers of lands identified as future employment centres from the very start of the development process, the objective is to share costs toward the development of a mutually beneficial plan (initial discussions are already underway with landowners in the three major centres shown on map 1).

The proposed action steps for supporting market initiatives are outlined in Appendix 2.

3. Proactive City Initiatives

The recommended actions in this section position The City to realize the EC strategic objectives through land ownership and proactive leadership. Purchasing land would be recommended in instances where there is no other choice available for securing the long-term option for employment. The corollary is to use all City-owned lands strategically to further EC objectives.

An assessment of employment centre development in other cities indicates that a strong public presence is essential for their success. Since few developers want to assume the risk of being the "first-in" in a new development concept, The City can play a role in reducing the risk by assuming a strong initial presence in the centres. This public presence can take the form of office development (involving lease or purchase of space for City services), recreation or cultural facilities, LRT stations, park and ride areas, as well as public art and other streetscape amenties. City involvement may also include provision of utilities and access or upgraded roadway facilities.

Not all employment centres will require the same level of Corporate involvement. Some centres/areas will develop through the normal planning and development approval

process. Others will require a greater level of effort to bring to fruition the strategic objectives of *The Calgary Plan*.

Once the suburban employment strategy is adopted and the priority centres are designated, the implementation approaches that Council would be called upon to consider include the following:

- Targeting infrastructure investments, such as transit or road improvements, to specific centres (to be determined in conjunction with funding for major transportation facilities);

- Relocating City offices and/or facilities to key centres, where feasible (this should be considered after The City has completed it Organizational Review Process); encouraging other levels of government or public agencies to locate offices and facilities in the centres;

- Considering alternative land use and regulatory requirements to make it easier for developers to comply with the Strategy;

- Determining whether or not The City should purchase land to support the long-term option for an employment centre (to be done on a site specific basis);

- Supporting marketing and promotional initiatives;

- Determining whether or not The City should create an in-house pool of expertise responsible for optimizing the strategic benefits of EC land transactions (e.g., exploring/coordinating co-development, joint-ventures or partnership opportunities, promoting market awareness of the *Employment Centres Strategy*, attracting tenants to strategic locations, and exploring redevelopment/intensification possibilities at strategic locations)

The proposed action steps for these proactive City initiatives are outlined in greater detail in Appendix 2.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Achieving suburban employment centre objectives is a critical dimension of The City's growth management strategy. The development of employment centres is integral to The City's ability to accommodate growth in a way that is affordable, efficient and able to enhance Calgarians' mobility choices without substantially lessening quality of life over time.

Anticipated Outcomes of the Employment Centres Strategy

1. Greater degree of coordination and consistency throughout the Corporation with regard to implementation of *Calgary Plan* and CTP policies related to land use and transportation.

2. Greater clarity, consistency and predictability for the development community in terms of development approvals.

3. More innovative, flexible and consistent land use bylaws and other development regulations designed to facilitate the desired planning outcomes (and avoid undesired outcomes or unnecessary development constraints at employment centre sites).

4. Better integration among the Corporation's planning, regulatory and budgeting processes with regard to elements associated with the employment centre strategy and transportation investments.

Recommendations

To achieve the objectives of the *Employment Centres Strategy* and realize the anticipated outcomes listed above, Council should:

1. Adopt the *Employment Centres Strategy* as a framework for implementing Council's strategic policies related to the location of employment activities and mobility strategies in Calgary.

2. Direct the Administration to put in place the priority actions, structures and processes necessary to support implementation of the Strategy, including the creation of an inter-departmental employment centres implementation team.

3. Investigate a variety of potential financing mechanisms to support the acquisition, servicing, development and joint-venture initiatives proposed in the Strategy and report back to Council with recommendations by October 1999.

4. Direct the Administration to investigate and report to Council on partnership opportunities with landowners in the three major employment centres (North Deerfoot, Southeast, South Macleod Trail) to support collaborative planning and development possibilities.

5. Direct the Administration to evaluate and identify priority sites for land acquisition and/or development, servicing, and/or joint-development, particularly with reference to the possible extension of all three LRT lines within the five to ten year timeframe, and report to Council with an action plan by October 1999.

1

Why "The Market" is Slow to Build Offices, Or Protect Long-Term Options For Office Uses, At Strategic Suburban Sites

The circumstances facing landowners and commercial developers in terms of constructing/marketing office space in the short-term, or maintaining the option for office development over the longer-term, represent very real challenges to effectively implementing Council's job/population strategies and, as a consequence, maintaining desired levels of mobility as the city grows. These challenges need to be well understood if effective implementation responses are to be developed.

Constraints in the Short-term

In general terms, landowner/developer reluctance or inability to build office space or other non-retail business forms (e.g. clean, light industrial, institutional or research uses) in strategic locations outside of the downtown in the short-term is a reflection of many factors:

- Limited (although generally increasing) demand for suburban office space in the short-term;
- Few precedents in Calgary where office space has been provided in a suburban context, resulting in a "not wanting to be the first to risk it" attitude among investors and developers. Likewise, few tenants may be willing to be the first to locate in a new area and, in particular, where there may not yet be many supportive services, amenities or an attractive level of transit service;
- A substantial inventory of existing designated, vacant or underdeveloped, serviced commercial lands in the downtown, inner city and industrial areas offering an ample supply of affordable, more conventional sites for office development;
- A shortage of available sites to accommodate office-related uses anywhere in the West, Northwest or Southwest sectors;
- Divergent views among commercial experts on the potential demand for suburban office space, and uncertainty as to which types of businesses might be attracted to suburban locations and what their other locational requirements might be;
- A strong and immediate demand for retail uses at locations that are appropriate for accommodating non-retail employment uses;

- Initial retail investors/developers are often not office developers, and are most comfortable operating in the short-term retail market that they understand and have confidence in;
- A continued demand for residential development that, in some instances, increases the value of the land and creates competition for lands that might accommodate employment activities over the longer-term.
- Few, if any, incentives to provide office space in strategic locations, coupled with a regulatory framework (e.g., plans, policies, Land Use Bylaw) that was not designed to support mixed-use, transit/pedestrian-oriented centres in suburban locations.

Challenges in "Keeping Options Open" for the Longer-Term

There are also complex challenges associated with protecting longer-term options for office development. This includes efforts to ensure that the layout or ownership patterns of retail development in the short-term do not hinder future intensification potential. These challenges include:

- An understandable reluctance on the part of landowners/investors to hold (and finance) developable land if it could be sold or developed to other "highest and best" uses in the short-term;
- The potential problems for landowners associated with creating a long-term inventory of vacant sites, for example: the financial burden of holding costs; the negative impact of vacant sites on adjacent parcels; the sense of uncertainty vacant sites can create; and, the risk of "NIMBY" obstructing the intended use.
- A sense that any form of real or perceived encumbrance or development guideline on retail sites reduces their short-term marketability by restricting their longer-term flexibility to develop in response to future market conditions;
- The difficulty of establishing ultimate public systems/rights-of-way (i.e., circulation for vehicles, transit and pedestrians) that cannot be legally secured in the short-term and that owners believe restrict the siting of retail buildings, parking and circulation systems in the short-term;
- A concern that making provision for subsequent intensification of higher density office development might trigger development obligations/costs or in some way reduce the short-term market value of the site;
- A concern where particular strategic sites may reflect less attractive locational attributes and/or visibility, especially relative to available sites elsewhere, such that they may not effectively compete for office or light industrial tenants.

Case Study: Strathcona Town Centre

While CTP was being prepared, the Strathcona Town Centre remained an undeveloped field of approximately 90 acres, carrying a land use designation that permitted the development of substantial retail (regional shopping centre) and provision for a lesser amount of suburban office space. While the central concept of utilizing the 90 acres originally designated for Strathcona Town Centre for an employment centre is no longer available due to a series of decisions regarding residential and recreational use of the land, the concept of an employment centre in

this general area is still valid and the Administration is pursuing opportunities to protect other lands in this area for the same purpose. The City's experience with this particular parcel of land indicates the difficulties in protecting lands for longer term strategic use in the face of pressures for an immediate market driven project.

2

Employment Centres Strategy - Action Steps

1. Groundwork for Action

The proposed action steps for laying the groundwork for implementation are outlined below. These actions would be coordinated and expedited by an interdepartmental "employment centres implementation team" and, where appropriate, pursued in consultation with experts in the development community and affected landowners.

1a. Adopt, Publish And Promote The Employment Centres Strategy

- Package and publish the *Employment Centres Strategy*, as approved by Council.
- Create an attractive, informative colour brochure, pamphlet and/or poster for broader circulation. Post it on The City's website.
- "In-Reach": Develop a clear and consistent implementation strategy within The City to ensure EC initiatives are received with a quick and consistent review.
- "Outreach": develop a marketing plan, communication tools and a media plan for the *Employment Centres Strategy* in general, and for specific sites as needed. Also use these tools to inform citizens about the beneficial aspects of ECs.

1b. Develop An Ongoing Communication Process With The Development Community And Other Key Stakeholders To Identify Development Opportunities, Improved Regulatory Tools & Innovative Methods Of Addressing Market Constraints

- Convene series of EC workshop sessions, involving interested members of the development industry and other key stakeholders. The purpose of the process will be to discuss opportunities, constraints, regulatory innovations, appropriate incentives, investments, etc.

1c. Investigate and Learn from EC experience in Other Cities

- Establish key contacts and investigate other cities to learn of their experiences and successes in EC implementation. Survey prototype development sites (e.g. suburban office park developments), review literature and document strengths/successes, shortcomings and lessons.

1d. Identify Key EC Locations and Assess their Potential

- Formalize an interdepartmental (EC implementation team) to do the work.
- Identify EC sites with current, appropriate planning in place or underway (e.g. CFB West, 146 Avenue, Anderson, and other LRT station areas), and synthesize/package that information for "Support" and "Proactive" purposes.
- Develop information/analysis framework to be used in assessing opportunities and needs of potential sites.
- Develop a consistent approach to communicating with current landowners, businesses and adjacent communities in undertaking site analysis; keep local Aldermen apprised of work underway.
- Determine priority sites and second level priority sites for planning work in 1999 and 2000.
- Do planning/technical analysis of priority sites to identify development potential, landowner interest, infrastructure/service needs, the most appropriate tools for specific sites, and "next steps" appropriate to each situation. Prepare a report to Council in the Fall of 1999 recommending site-specific actions and/or investments.
- Continue to investigate other potential opportunities for EC locations in strategic areas, particularly on the city's west side.

1e. Create Effective Policy, Guidelines and Regulatory Tools

- Work with landowners/developers/investors/planners and CPAG staff to identify and address existing policy and/or regulatory tools that pose barriers, constrain and/or contradict aspects of the *Employment Centres Strategy*. Revise bylaws, processes, procedures, plans and/or policy, as appropriate.
- Work with external experts to create flexible and/or innovative regulatory tools/approaches that promote/address specific aspects of EC development more effectively.
- Develop a list of acceptable interim uses consistent with the strategic objectives.

1f. Develop a Generic Package of EC Design Principles

- Building on existing work (e.g., *Calgary Transportation Plan*, *Transit Friendly Design Guide*, *The Calgary Plan*, etc.), prepare a general "best principles and practices" document that includes existing Council policy; intended

interpretations; illustrations of the principles; "best examples" from other cities and local Calgary examples.

- Publish the package and promote/use as a reference tool.

1g. Provide an Evaluation of Strategic Benefits for Proposals at EC Sites

- Establish criteria for assessing the contribution of development proposals on EC sites toward achieving strategic objectives, and report expected benefits / implications in reports to CPC, Council and SDAB.

- Support CPAG staff to do assessments and assist in reports / presentations, as required.

1h. Develop Performance Measures

- Develop performance measures and a monitoring framework for the EC Strategy. Report results to Council annually through the Advisory Committee for the Implementation and Monitoring of the Calgary Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan.

2. Supporting Market Initiatives

The proposed action steps for supporting market initiatives are outlined below.

2a. Create Effective Development Incentives to Stimulate EC Development

- Convene a workshop with the EC implementation team, industry experts and other stakeholders to examine a broad range of potential incentives to encourage EC site development.

- Test possible incentives for their effectiveness, implementability and potential impact on development economics.

- Identify specific legal mechanisms to be created/modified to put potential incentives in place.

- Take proposed incentives package to Council for approval.

2b. Create an Applications "Quick-Response" Team

- Create a "quick-response" applications team to advocate for, and expedite, supportive applications; (team to include CPAG staff; Planners; Corporate Properties; Law Department; Transportation/Transit; Engineering; Parks & Recreation)

- Orient members to the *Employment Centres Strategy*.

- Formalize mechanisms for identifying EC site applications and deploying the "Quick-Response" team.

- Make use of the Director's Growth Management Committee as a mechanism for sanctioning the team's initiatives/positions and mediating different points of view, as required.

- Develop a communication process between the "quick-response" team and the broader EC implementation team for coordination and support.

2c. Conduct Joint Planning Studies with Landowners of EC Sites

- Identify opportunities to jointly investigate / plan specific EC sites with supportive landowners, on an opportunity basis, and as resources permit.

- Determine mutual basis for collaborative planning / investigations.

- For each study, define scope, products, cost and mechanisms for sharing costs, as required.

- Identify "next steps" or specific proposals, as appropriate.

- Sites where collaborative investigation is being considered or is currently underway include:

    - Southeast Employment centre;
    - CFB West planning area;
    - North Deerfoot employment area;
    - lands south of Marquis of Lorne Trail and immediately west of MacLeod Trail.

3. Proactive City Initiatives

The proposed action steps for supporting proactive City initiatives are outlined below.

3a. Use City-owned Sites Strategically

- EC implementation team to inventory and analyze intended / strategic use of all existing City-owned lands within or adjacent to EC sites.

- Establish guidelines for the development, use, lease and/or sale of these City-owned lands to ensure that all strategic opportunities are considered and, to the extent possible, realized.

3b. Purchase Land in Key EC Sites, When and Where Beneficial To Do So

- Identify specific EC sites, on either a strategic or opportunity basis, that The City should consider purchasing to secure the long-term option for non-retail jobs.

- Investigate alternative financing options. Suggestions to date have included:
  - Dedicate a portion of transportation infrastructure dollars to support transit-supportive land uses and improved job/population balance;
  - Broaden The City's land investment portfolio by adding EC sites, and change priorities for the use of profits from sale of industrial lands to finance strategic acquisitions;
  - Finance the acquisition and/or cover service charges through revenue from interim uses (e.g., taxes, leases); identify a supplementary source to cover shortfalls;
  - Consider joint ventures, where appropriate;
  - Investigate other potential sources of funding – e.g., ask the Province for additional funding or for the legislative ability to generate new funds locally.
- Determine appropriate interim uses and lease arrangements, where appropriate.

3c. Establish an ECs Development Mechanism

- Formalize either an in-house "EC Development Group" (with appropriate areas of expertise) or an arms-length Employment Centres Development Agency, to act as the point of contact for interested developers, broker incentive agreements, and coordinate/expedite real estate transactions related to the acquisition, development, lease or sale of strategic EC sites. Review these options in the context of the Corporate organizational review process and the Request for Proposals related to partnering in the development of transportation infrastructure and the development of lands around LRT stations.

3d. Provide Municipal Infrastructure to Support EC Development, Where Strategic To Do So

- Evaluate municipal benefits associated with providing municipal infrastructure (e.g., LRT extenstion/stations, water/sewer trunk extensions) earlier or in partnership with land owners/developers to encourage EC development, on an opportunity basis.

3e. Explore Co-development, Joint Venture or Partnership Opportunities

- Examine the potential of co-development, joint ventures and/or partnerships for furthering EC objectives, again in cooperation with the Request for Proposals for transportation partnerships. If appropriate, develop criteria and processes for managing these collaborative ventures. Survey prospective partners.

3f. Decentralize City and Government Personnel / Services to EC Sites, As Appropriate

- Examine the potential of decentralizing appropriate City services / personnel to EC locations. Review these possibilities following the Corporate organizational review process.

- Encourage other public agencies (e.g., Provincial or Federal Government services) to consider future expansion or relocation to strategic sites, perhaps in partnership with The City.

3g. Work with Nearby Urban Municipalities to Support Employment Growth

- Promote a regional EC perspective by working with nearby urban municipalities to support expanded employment opportunities in the surrounding urban centres. The development of a strong employment base in existing urban centres is consistent with Calgary's UniCity approach to growth management.

3h. Engage a Real Estate Expert to Expedite Market Awareness of the Strategy

- Examine the potential benefits of engaging a real estate expert to promote the *Employment Centres Strategy* and to help attract tenants to strategic locations.

3i. Explore Redevelopment/Intensification Possibilities

- Identify EC sites with redevelopment or intensification potential.

- Approach landowners to discuss the *Employment Centres Strategy* and explore their interest in redevelopment / intensification that furthers EC objectives.

- Identify EC sites where land use redesignation would substantially further EC objectives. Approach landowners to explore their support for redesignation, and if supportive, work with them.